



CTE in Tennessee

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Assistant Commissioner's Corner Featuring Guest Writer Randy McPherson

EdD, LPC, NCSC, NBCT, Trezevant Career & Technology Center
American School Counselor Association's
2011 School Counselor of the Year



A summary of the article *Past Achievements & Future Dreams* from the Spring 2011 Issue of the National Career Development Association magazine, *Career Developments*. The article features a successful Career Technical Center in Memphis. [Click here](#) to view the entire article.

We don't often realize the power of professional development but sometimes we are fortunate enough to hear a philosophy that makes sense and aligns with our own core beliefs. In the late 90's I attended a series of College Board Equity 2000 workshops in Washington, DC. The focus of the training asked school counselors to change from "Gatekeepers" to "Advocates" and the stated vision of the training was to transform school counselors into educational leaders to work in tandem with teachers and administrators to support academic excellence for every student.

Dr. Russell Quaglia led us through *8 Conditions That Make a Difference™* for students to reach their goals. If students are to have and maintain high aspirations, the factors/conditions that must be in place are: *Belonging, Heroes, Sense of Accomplishment, Fun & Excitement, Curiosity & Creativity, Spirit of Adventure, Leadership & Responsibility, and Confidence to Take Action* (Quaglia 2006). And I said wow! Those eight conditions collectively describe the environment in which learning and growth should take place. Can you imagine a place where students are encouraged to explore, ask questions, and connect with people who help them discover the world that awaits them?

This was the moment I began to form an enhanced concept of career development to capture a student's attention, they need imagination and excitement. When I talk to students about developing a plan for transitioning beyond high school, I talk about passion, not money. Interest inventories are tools, a step in the journey, but not the destination. The process opens doors for exploration and discovery and is not intended to provide definitive answers. It should be a life process involving a community of supporters not an annual activity in a career guidance session.

The roots of career guidance are traced back to Frank Parsons, often called the Father of Vocational Education (O'Brien 2001). Parsons's academic and professional résumé is extensive. It includes the framework for the first counselor education program and a litany of career-based literature that transformed how people viewed career choices. Parsons lived during the period in US history when our nation was changing from an agrarian-based economy to an industrial powerhouse. He saw an economic future that would create career opportunities beyond anything imagined before. Parsons had a dream which was to provide people of all ages a structure to help them understand how their personality, interest, abilities, and resources could assist in developing a plan leading to a career that best predicted vocational success. He was a social reformer and a voice for the common man. He believed career success could bridge the socio-economic gap that existed between the common laborer and the wealthy. Although over 100 years have passed, the platform Parsons provided for this paradigm shift is still significant today.

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Does career-specific education impact student achievement and transitions? The answer is YES!

Research comparing a random student population in four career magnet schools in New York City to those in four comprehensive high schools found through surveys and transition tracking that career magnet schools' graduates were significantly less likely to engage in behaviors associated with poor school performance. They were less likely to

- have been in a fight
- smoke
- drink alcohol
- use drugs
- become pregnant or impregnate
- be arrested by police on serious charges

Career magnet schools also reported students having

- more positive feelings of school attachment
- higher graduation rates
- higher rates of students planning to attend post-secondary
- higher rates of college matriculation

When looking at those who attended college, career magnet school graduates

- took more college credits
- had higher postsecondary graduation rates
- had higher salaries

Career magnet school students attributed positive academic choices and successes to their high school at higher rates than did the comprehensive high school students (Flaxman, Guerrero, and Gretchen, 2000).

The role of the school counselor and career guidance professional is key to implementing a comprehensive college and career development program for all students. The National Career Development Guidelines for K-12 and adult learners were first published in 1989 to serve as a resource for school counselors and career professionals in delivery of competence-based skills. The Spring 2010 issue of *National Career Development Association Magazine* published the results of a survey of career development services offered by school counselors (Schenck, Anctil, & Smith, 2010). The survey revealed school counselors accepted the responsibility of comprehensive career development programming but struggled to find the time to devote to career guidance and lacked recognition of the importance of career guidance to students. The focus in the proposed Blueprint for Reform (US DOE, 2010) is to ensure all students are ready to successfully transition to postsecondary education. It should create a shift from thinking only about graduation rates to a stronger focus on the career readiness of high school graduates to enter a globally competitive world (see some of the survey results on page 1).

Report Calls for National Effort to Get Young Americans into a Realistic Path of Employability

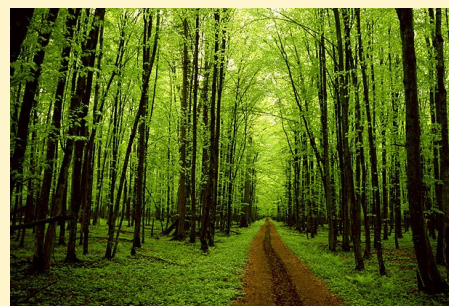
The Pathways to Prosperity Project, based at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, released a report that examines the reasons for our failure to prepare young adults and advances an exciting vision for how the United States might regain the lead in educational attainment that it held for over a century. *Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century* contends that our national strategy for education and youth development has been too narrowly focused on an academic, classroom-based approach. In response, the report advocates development of a comprehensive pathways network to serve youth in high school and beyond.

These pathways would be based on three essential elements. The first is the development of a broader vision of school reform that embraces multiple pathways to help young people successfully navigate the journey from adolescence to adulthood. The report contends that, at present, we place far too much emphasis on a single pathway to success: attending and graduating from a four-year college. Yet only 30 percent of young adults successfully complete this preferred pathway. Meanwhile, even in the second decade of the 21st century, most jobs do not require a bachelor's degree. The report notes that while the United States is expected to create 47 million jobs in the 10-year period

ending in 2018, only one-third of these jobs will require a bachelor's or higher degree. Almost as many jobs – some 30 percent – will only require an associate's degree or a post-secondary occupational credential. Given these realities, the report argues we need to broaden the range of high-quality pathways that we offer young adults. This would include more emphasis on career counseling and high-quality career education, as well as apprenticeship programs and community colleges as viable routes to well-paying jobs.

Second, the report argues that we need to ask our nation's employers to play a greatly expanded role in supporting the pathways system and in providing more opportunities for young adults to participate in work-based learning and actual jobs related to their programs of study. Third, the report contends that we need to develop a new social compact between society and our young people. The compact's central goal would be that by the time they reach their mid-20s, every young adult will be equipped with the education and experience he or she needs to lead a successful life as an adult.

"We are the only developed nation that depends so exclusively on its higher education system as the sole institutional vehicle to help young people transition



from adolescence to adulthood," says Robert Schwartz, academic dean and professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, who heads the Pathways to Prosperity Project. As the first president of Achieve, Schwartz has been a key supporter of the need to raise expectations and academic standards for all young people. But in recent years, Schwartz has become increasingly concerned about the "college for all" movement, especially as that movement has led states to allow the admissions requirements of four-year colleges and universities to become the default curriculum for all high school students. "Unless we are willing to provide more flexibility and choice in the last two years of high school, and more opportunities for students to pursue program options that link work and learning, we will continue to lose far too many young people along the path to graduation," he says.

Michael Rodman

To read the full report visit: http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news_events/features/2011_Pathways_to_Prosperty_Feb2011.pdf



2020 Vision Committee Frames Future Goals

The 2020 Vision Committee has been setting goals, objectives, and initiatives for Career and Technical Education (CTE) for several years. The committee's vision is to determine where a CTE student needs to be in the year 2020. The mission of the 2020 Vision Committee is *To provide Tennessee students the opportunity to participate in a rigorous and relevant career and technical education program that leads to academic and technical achievement and successful employment in a global economy.*

With most of the original goals either being met or well on the way to being met, the committee is reviewing the Harvard Study, *Pathways to Prosperity*. The four pillars within the 2020 Vision Committee have initially started working in the following areas:

- Ensuring a comprehensive career counseling program for all students
- Promoting consistency of quality CTE programs across the state
- Breaking down cultural barriers addressing post high school credential for all
- Determining what CTE can do to address deficiencies in oral and written communication skills, critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity for all students

To access the 2020 Vision Committee PowerPoint presentation which lists the current membership, goals, and objectives visit our website at www.tn.gov/education/cte/. The 2020 Vision Committee presentation can be located in the CTE Mission and Vision box at the top of the page. The 2020 vision goals and objectives continually strive to be a work in pro-

Benchmark Project Provides a New Resource for Rigorous, Engaging Instruction

Special Thanks to our Benchmark Teachers!

The Benchmark Papers Project was designed to show educators what proficiency looks like both in terms of teacher instruction and student work.

In the Benchmark Project, teachers incorporated the CTE Competency Attainment Rubric and Webb's Depth of Knowledge into their lesson plans to make instruction more rigorous. The teachers were challenged to move the students beyond simple skills and concepts/recalling information and instead emphasize short-term strategic and extended thinking.

The lessons were reviewed and the teachers made revisions for the following semester. Upon teaching the revised lessons, the teachers were instructed to bring back samples of student work that demonstrated each of the levels in the Competency Attainment Rubric (below basic, basic, proficient, and advanced).

During the final meeting the revised lessons were uploaded into *CTE Online*, a free program designed to act as a medium to deliver quality lessons and instruction that can be shared with CTE teachers across the state. To access these lessons and more, follow the directions on the right.

Creating an Account in CTE Online

1. Go to <http://www.cteonline.org>
2. Click on the "Sign Up" button located on the left hand side under "New to CTE Online?"
3. Fill in the information keeping in mind that usernames and passwords are case sensitive
4. Under "Institution Name" please enter Tennessee (it will automatically bring up Tennessee Nashville, CA... this is because we are piloting from a California system, go ahead and select this). This will make sure that you are in the Tennessee group and will give you access to the Benchmark lessons.
5. Do not worry about a registration code
6. Type the words that appear at the bottom and click on the "Register" button
7. You will now be on your home page. Please take the time to upload a picture of yourself and feel free to browse the lessons that are available to you.

For questions and/or complications with this process, please contact:

Heather Justice
Special Projects Coordinator
Heather.Justice@tn.gov

Highlighting Outstanding CTE Programs

Adding Rigor and Relevance
Building Postsecondary Transitions



Tennessee Virtual Enterprises International

Virtual Enterprises International (VEI) teaches students about business, entrepreneurship, finance, economics and technology through a task-based curriculum and hands-on activities. Guided by a teacher/facilitator and business mentors, students create and manage a virtual company, conducting business with other virtual firms nationally and internationally.

Open to all students, VEI empowers and motivates participants to develop a range of academic, business, technology and professional skills that prepare them for success in post-secondary education, employment and the community. With emphasis on college and career readiness, VEI offers students a competitive edge through project-based, collaborative learning and the

development of 21st Century skills in entrepreneurship, global awareness, problem solving, communications, financial literacy and technology, and includes a strong academic component focused on writing, speaking, and math.

In Tennessee VEI programs students study and receive credit in an experiential economics curriculum, thereby linking the career technical component of VEI with an academic subject required for high school graduation. Including economics in VEI is a promising way to integrate academics into the program.

For more information, contact Cindy Boyd, Virtual Enterprises International State Director at boydc@rcschools.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

2011 Tennessee LEAD Conference - The Faces of Learning

September 19-21, Nashville Convention Center/
Renaissance Hotel, Nashville, TN

TN Council for Career and Technical Education Meeting

October 14-16, Gatlinburg, TN

Fall TDCTE Meeting & New Directors Meeting

October 27-28, Hotel Preston, Nashville, TN

Literacy Corner

We plan to include a literacy strategy in this corner of the newsletter in each issue. As CTE directors you can model these literacy strategies to your teachers by asking teachers to use them as a part of a professional development session or meeting on a particular topic. Teachers will, in turn, see how they can use the same strategy in their classroom.

The Exit Ticket

Benefits: This literacy tool can give students an opportunity to focus their thoughts on the essential part of the lesson, put their thoughts in writing, and give the teacher feedback on the level of understanding that students have.

Directions: Hand out a card or a "ticket" which contains a one-question prompt on which students write an answer to the question. Students hand you their ticket on their way out of the door. Exit tickets do not have to be graded and there may not be right or wrong answers to the question. The following are some sample questions:

What did you learn today?

What did you think about what you learned?

How will you use what you learned today?

What do you think our next steps should be?

One thing that I really liked about today's class was _____.

Division of Postsecondary Access & Success/CTE

4th Floor Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, TN 37243-0383
615.532.2800 ph